

# **City of Woonsocket Budget Commission**

**City Hall**

**169 Main Street**

**Woonsocket, RI 02895**

**(401) 762-6400**

## **Working Session Minutes**

**August 9, 2012 3:00PM**

**City Hall, Third Floor - Harris Hall**

**All members were present. Also in attendance were David Eaton, Director of Budget Commission Affairs, and Edmund Alves, Esq., Legal Counsel to the Budget Commission.**

### **Agenda Item #1 – Approval of July 16 Minutes**

**Motion was made by President Ward and seconded by Mayor Fontaine to approve the minutes of the regular and executive session meetings of July 16, 2012, as presented, a voice vote on same being unanimous.**

### **Agenda Item #2 – Public Comment**

**School Committee Chairwoman Vimala Phongsavanh, Michael Davis, Lou Pryor, Anita McGuire Forcier, Michael Morin, Roxanne Carey, and**

**Estelle Bubble addressed the Commission.**

**Agenda Item #3 – a.)Cash Flow Summary**

**Finance Director Thomas Bruce reviewed the cash flow summary.**

**b.) City/School Purchases/Payments \$15,000 over/under**

**After review by Mr. Bruce, motion was made by President Ward and seconded by Mayor Fontaine to approve payments from the City General Fund in the amount of \$711,891.48, a voice vote on same being unanimous.**

**Motion was made by President Ward and seconded by Commissioner Schaefer to approve School Department payables in the amount of \$327,340.57, a voice vote on same being unanimous.**

**Motion was made by President Ward and seconded by Mayor Fontaine to approve payments from the City Restricted Accounts in the amount of \$123,135.66, a voice vote on same being unanimous.**

**c.) Review of Budget Commission Action Timeline**

**Mr. Eaton reviewed the action timeline. The Commissioners discussed the possibility of moving the location of meetings to Harris Library, and discussed having a closed session at the beginning of**

**each meeting, from 3:00 PM to 3:30 PM.**

**d.) City and School Bid Requests**

- 1. No Bids.**

**Agenda Item #4 – Vote on Revised Fiscal Year 2013 School Budget**

**Superintendent of Schools Giovanna Donoyan summarized the revised budget and discussed how the two hundred fifty students from Fifth Avenue School would be relocated**

**Upon questioning by Chairman Sequino, Dr. Donoyan stated that fifth graders would be moved to the Middle School, all-day kindergarten would be kept, and that excess capacity was based on enrollment at the elementary level.**

**Upon questioning by Commissioner Schaefer, Dr. Donoyan stated that there have been two other elementary schools closed in the past ten years, and that the budget was prepared with RIDE.**

**Upon questioning by President Ward, Ralph Malafronte stated that the projection of number of students was RIDE's projection, and that the proposed capital budget and funds for fire code violation corrections were not in the plan, but may have already been approved as part of a five-year plan. In response to President Ward's statement that priorities may have changed a lot in the last five years, Mr.**

**Malafronte suggested that the Commission might want to meet with the School Department Facilities Director. President Ward asked Mr. Eaton to contact the person in charge of facilities at RIDE to see where Woonsocket Schools are in terms of compliance with code violations.**

**Chairman Sequino stated that the budget before the Commission was prepared by RIDE with the closing of Fifth Avenue School included, though the School Committee adopted a budget the previous evening for the same dollar amount, but with Fifth Avenue School remaining open, with no additional funds to make that possible.**

**Mayor Fontaine asked Dr. Donoyan if the PARK Assessment was new, and she stated that it was talked about for a year to a year and a half. Mayor Fontaine asked why, then, was the Curriculum Director at the School Department let go, and Dr. Donoyan stated that the person left to take a job at RIDE. Mayor Fontaine stated that the director still worked for Woonsocket, but was allowed to do work for RIDE, and Dr. Donoyan asked if the matter could be further discussed in a closed session.**

**Motion was made by Commissioner Schaefer and seconded by President Ward to approve the revised Fiscal Year 2012 School Department budget with the closing of Fifth Avenue School, a voice vote on same being unanimous.**

## **Agenda Item #5 – Public Safety COLA**

**After discussion with Mr. Bruce, motion was made by Commissioner Schaefer and seconded by Mayor Fontaine to pay the COLA, subject to disclosure to retirees that the fund is close to critical status and that the Budget Commission is reviewing whether the COLA was properly calculated initially.**

## **Agenda Item #6 – WIDC PILOT Agreement**

**After discussion with Tax Assessor Christopher Celeste, the matter was continued to the meeting of August 16. Mayor Fontaine asked Mr. Celeste to determine what percentage of the subject property was being used for daycare and what percentage was being used for education.**

## **Agenda Item #7 – Medical Emergency Distribution System**

**After review by Fire Chief Gary Lataille, motion was made by Mayor Fontaine and seconded by President Ward to approve the Medical Emergency Distribution System contract between the RI Department of Health and the City of Woonsocket, a voice vote on same being unanimous.**

## **Agenda Item #8 – Police Non Sick/Injury Bonus**

**After review by Police Chief Thomas Carey, motion is made by President Ward and seconded by Commissioner Schaefer to approve the non-sick/injury bonus for Fiscal Year 2012-2013 to members of the IBPO, Local 404, a voice vote on same being unanimous.**

#### **Agenda Item #9 – Budget Commission Meeting Changes**

**Chairman Sequino discussed changes to the Commission's meetings, including a closed session that would take place before each meeting from 3:00 to 3:30 PM, a deadline of 3:00 PM on the Tuesday before each meeting to submit items for the agenda, and the designation of Mr. Eaton as the contact person for all information to and from the Budget Commission.**

#### **Agenda Item #10 – Other Commission Items**

**After discussion with Dr. Donoyan, Commissioner Dutremble stated that she wanted to discuss the controller position and organizational structure at the School Department at the August 23 meeting.**

**President Ward asked for a copy of the RIDE's facilities assessment, and explained that he voted to approve the School Department's budget, with the closing of Fifth Avenue School included, because in his experience, the closing of a school never turns out to be the problem it is anticipated to be, all-day kindergarten will be kept, and the Budget Commission's job is to bring the City into fiscal**

**compliance. He stated that if the Budget Commission was going to ask City employees and retirees to take major cuts, there would also need to be concessions by others.**

**Agenda Item #11 – Adjourn**

**Upon motion of Mayor Fontaine seconded by President Ward it is voted that meeting be adjourned at 5:06 P.M.**

**Attest:   Andrea M. Bicki   City Clerk**